

## *No. 14 - Kaweah River Basin Integrated Regional Water Management Region*

### **Region Acceptance Process Summary**

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#### **General Description of Region**

The Kaweah River Basin Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Region is comprised of approximately 340,000 acres in the counties of Tulare and Kings. This Region is within the Tulare Lake Hydrologic Unit. This Region is defined primarily by hydrologic boundaries, except the southern boundary which is defined by the Tule River IRWM Region. Kaweah River Basin IRWM Region boundaries follow the watershed boundary formed by in-part by Cottonwood Creek to the north. However, this creates a small overlap with the Upper Kings Water Forum IRWM Region's southern boundary. Also, small islands of non-participation within the proposed Kaweah River Basin Region exist, such as the City of Exeter.

The Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District (KDWCD) has acted as the lead agency in the management of water resources available to the Kaweah River Basin, particularly as they have applied to groundwater resources and flood and storm water control.

Several agencies have executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and include KDWCD, Exeter Irrigation District, and the City of Lindsay. Several petitions also have been recently submitted to join in the MOU, including the City of Visalia, the County of Tulare, the Tulare Irrigation District, the City of Tulare, the Ivanhoe Irrigation District, and the St. Johns Water District. Principal water management activities undertaken by the cooperating agencies within the Kaweah River Basin have joined together with multiple agencies for management of pre-1914 water rights, groundwater management, and development of a formal IRWM Plan. The Kaweah River Basin IRWM Region has a functionally equivalent plan. This IRWM Region has indicated that there is ongoing coordination and cooperation with neighboring IRWM Regions, in particular with the Tule River IRWM Region.

#### **Interview Conclusions- Conditional Approval for SBXX1 Funds**

DWR approves the Kaweah River Basin IRWM Region to allow this Region to complete for planning and implementation funding from Senate Bill XX1 (Perata, Stats. 2008, Ch. 1), California Water Code §83000-

83002.7. However, for subsequent funding rounds, the Kaweah River Basin and Tule River IRWM Regions must explore options on how best to structure the regional boundaries in this area. DWR's intent is to facilitate future communication and cooperation between the Kaweah River Basin and Tule River IRWM Regions, to develop a single IRWM Region that fosters integration and cooperation, and does not result in overlapping and competing planning efforts. Nearby "gap" areas, not covered by the Kern County, Poso Creek, Tule River, Kaweah River, or Southern Sierra IRWM Regions should also be considered for inclusion in the IRWM planning effort.

The stated communication and cooperation, region boundary structure, as well as inclusion of "gap" areas, will be considered when determining future region approval and eligibility for subsequent funding rounds.